



Ball-Chain Plant Hangers

Written By: Sean Michael Ragan



TOOLS:

- [Wire cutters side cutters \(1\)](#)



PARTS:

- [Ball chain \(60"\)](#)
You could certainly use smaller- or larger-diameter ball chain, and of course the total length you need will be determined by the size of the pot you want to hang, and how low you want to hang it.
- [Coupling ball chain straight \(8\)](#)
You can get the kind with or without the side opening.
- [Coupling ball chain eye \(4\)](#)

SUMMARY

Most people are familiar with the common ball chain "straight coupling" that lets you join one end of a chain to another.

There's also a less-familiar "eye" coupling, however, that lets you join the end of a ball chain to the middle of another. You crimp the terminating chain's last ball into the coupling and pass the continuous chain through the eye, the opening of which is just large enough to pass the spherical links. It is *not*, however, large enough to pass the diameter of a straight

coupling. So if you sandwich an eye coupling between two straight couplings, you can make a fixed three-way joint. And believe me, the fixed joints are necessary if you're going to make complex constructions. If you leave them free to slide, things rapidly become very tangled.

A simple three-way joint constructed from ball-chain fittings is the core of the project. It opens up the possibility for pretty much any netted ball-chain webbing you can imagine. This project just covers the most basic, utilitarian design of a simple plant hanger, but once you know how to make these joints, you can pretty much make a ball-chain webbing to fit any object.

Step 1 — Construct joints



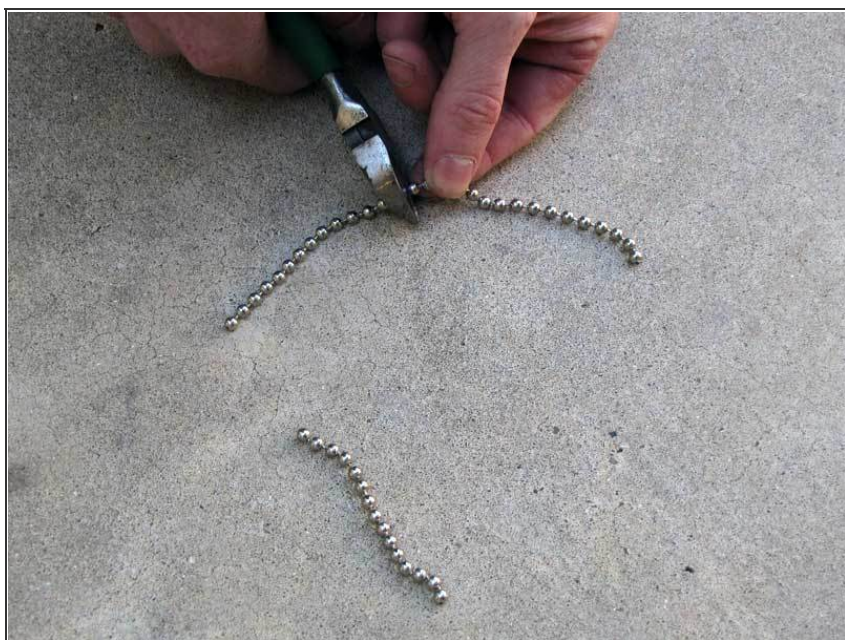
- Use side-cutting pliers to cut four two-ball lengths of chain.
- Build four three-way joints as follows:
 - Attach a straight coupling to one link of a two-ball chain.
 - Slip the eye of an eye coupling over the free ball until it butts up against the straight coupling.
 - Attach another straight coupling to the free ball. This will trap the eye coupling between the two straight couplings.

Step 2 — Measure diameter of pot



- Wrap a length of ball chain around the pot, snugly, at the level you want the pot to sit. On a common terracotta flower pot like mine, just beneath the protruding rim makes the most sense.
- Note the point at which the chain just doubles back on itself. Then count the chain two links shorter for each joint in the loop. There are three joints in this loop, so shorten it by six links.
- Make the cut.

Step 3 — Cut chain into equal lengths



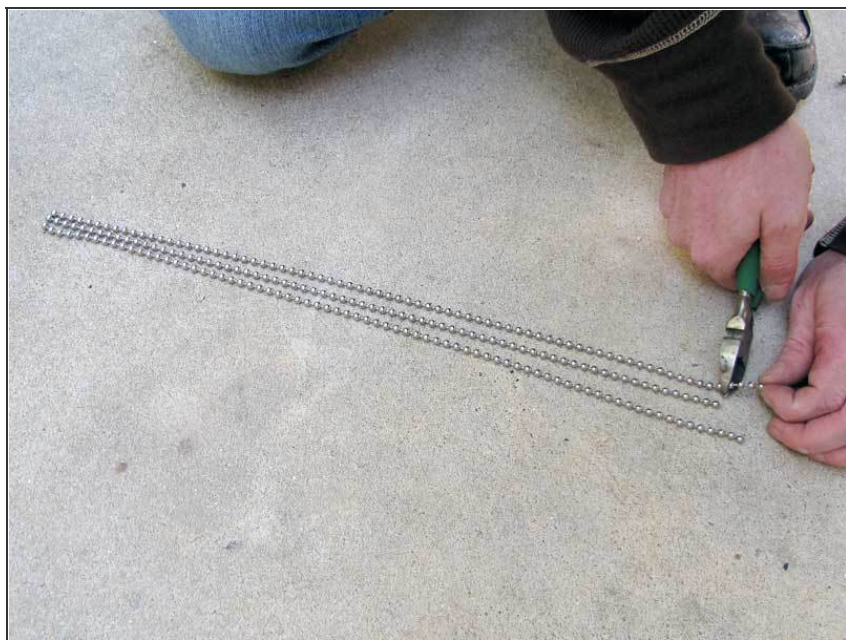
- Three of them, in this case. If the chain is short, you can just count the number of links and divide by three. If it's long, fold it in thirds and cut at the folds.
- Cut the chain.

Step 4



- Assemble the cradle
- Link the chains and joints into a continuous loop, as shown.

Step 5



- Cut the hanging chains
- Guesstimate how long you want the hangers to be. Or, if you're compulsive, you can figure it out exactly with some trigonometry. Mine are about 14" long apiece.
- Cut one length of chain to serve as a prototype.
- Cut two lengths of chain that are each two links shorter than the prototype. Now you've got one long chain and two short chains.

Step 6



- Assemble
- Link the three hanging chains together at the remaining three-way joint. The two shorter chains attach to the straight couplings, and the long one to the eye coupling.
- Attach the three loose ends of the hanging chains to the three free eye couplings on the cradle.

Step 7



- Hang it up!

A large number of multi-way joints are possible. [This page](#) illustrates those that I've come up

with so far.

Once you know how to make fixed multi-way joints in ball chain, the possible uses for it expand dramatically. Plant hangers are just an easy example.

Ballchain.com carries all kinds of ball chain and fittings, including some exotic types in unusual colors and materials.

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